receiving a high resolution digital image at the host from a first user via the Internet;

generating a low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image;

storing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image at the host, the stored low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image having a pathname;

receiving login information at the host from the first user, the login information including a first user identifier and a first password;

determining if the first login information is valid;

downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the first user via the Internet if the first login information is valid;

detecting a selection made by the first user, the selection made by the first user identifying the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image;

receiving data from the first user identifying a second user;

e-mailing a notification message from the host to the second user via the Internet;

transmitting at least a portion of the pathname to the second user via the Internet;

downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the second user via the Internet; and

routing the high resolution digital image to a printer associated with the host.

92. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of routing the high resolution digital image to a printer associated with the host is performed in response to an input from the second user.

93. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein at least a portion of the notification message is prepared by the first user.

94. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein at least a portion of the notification message sent from the host to the second user via the Internet comprises a message from the first user to the second user.

95. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of receiving data from the first user identifying a second user comprises the step of receiving authorization data from the first user, the authorization data specifying that the second user is to be granted access to digital images of the first user.

96. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 95, further comprising the step of associating a second user identifier and a second password with the second user, the second user identifier being different than the first user identifier, the second password being different than the first password.

97. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of generating a low resolution copy of the high resolution digital

image comprises the step of generating a thumbnail JPEG file by making a copy of the high resolution digital image and discarding some of the pixel information.

98. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, further comprising the step of translating the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image from a first file format to a second file format, the first file format being different than the second file format.

99. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of storing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image comprises the step of storing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image in a file format selected by the first user.

100. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the second user via the Internet comprises the step of downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image in a file format selected by the second user.

101. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, further comprising the step of causing dummy thumbnails in the form of standardized icons to be displayed.

102. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, wherein the step of downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital

image to the second user via the Internet is performed in response to the second user clicking on an icon.

103. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 91, further comprising the step of maintaining transparency of the high resolution digital image with respect to a plurality of non-authorized users.

104. A digital image management system comprising:

an electronic storage facility for providing storage for high resolution digital images of a plurality of unrelated image providers, at least some of the high resolution digital images stored in the electronic storage facility being used to develop corresponding low resolution copies, each high resolution digital image having a higher bandwidth communication requirement than each of the corresponding low resolution copies, the electronic storage facility storing the high resolution digital images of a first one of the image providers such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider can only be accessed by authorized users identified by the first image provider and such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider are transparent to other unrelated image providers that are not authorized by the first image provider;

means for notifying an authorized user identified by the first image provider that the authorization has been authorized to download a low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image, wherein the notifying means transmits at least a portion of a pathname associated with the low resolution copy to the authorized user;

means for allowing the authorized user to download the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image of the first image provider from the electronic storage facility to a first location;

means for electronically routing the high resolution digital image to a printer in response to a request from the authorized user.

105. A digital image management system as defined in claim 104, further comprising image handling means for processing the high resolution digital images to develop the corresponding low resolution copies.

106. A digital image management system as defined in claim 104, further comprising a mail database, the mail database including a conventional address for the authorized user.

107. A digital image management system as defined in claim 104, further comprising a search engine for searching among digital images stored in the storage device.

108. A digital image management and delivery system comprising:

a storage device for providing storage for digital images of a plurality of unrelated image providers, the storage device storing the digital images of a first one of the image providers such that the digital images of the first image provider can only be accessed by authorized users identified by the first image provider and such that the digital images of the first image provider are transparent to users that are not authorized by the first image provider;

a searching engine for developing a subset of the digital images stored in the storage device by the first image provider in response to inputs received from the first image provider, the searching engine being adapted to download low resolution copies of the subset to the first image provider;

a mail server for e-mailing a notification message from the first image provider to a first authorized user identified by the first image provider via the Internet;

a transmitter for transmitting at least a portion of a pathname to the first authorized user via the Internet; and

a router for electronically routing at least one high resolution copy of a digital image contained in the subset and identified by the first authorized user to a printer.

109. A system as defined in claim 108 wherein the digital images are input to the system by the first image provider via a communication device.

110. A system as defined in claim 109 further comprising an image handler for processing the digital images input by the first image provider, the image handler being adapted to develop low resolution images of the digital images received from the first image provider and to store both the digital images received from the first image provider and the low resolution images thereof in the storage device in an addressable fashion for future searching.

111. A method of managing digital images comprising the steps of:

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a first plurality of digital images provided by a first image provider in an electronically searchable format on a storage device;

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a second plurality of digital images provided by a second image provider in an electronically searchable format on a storage device;

permitting the first image provider to locate and download a low resolution copy of at least one of the digital images provided by the first image provider, the second plurality of digital images being transparent to the first image provider;

e-mailing a notification message via the Internet to a first authorized user identified by the first image provider;

transmitting at least a portion of a pathname associated with the at least one digital image to the first authorized user via the Internet;

receiving a request to download from the first authorized user, the request identifying the at least one digital image;

receiving instructions from the first authorized user directing that the at least one digital image be printed; and

automatically electronically routing the high resolution copy of the at least one digital image to a printer.

112. A digital image management and delivery system comprising:

a storage device for storing digital images received from a first digital image provider and a second digital image provider;

a searching engine for developing a subset of the digital images stored in the storage device in response to inputs received from a first user, the searching engine being adapted to download low resolution copies of the subset to the first user;

a job order developer responsive to inputs received from the first user for developing a job order which includes at least one high resolution copy of a digital image contained in the subset and identified by the first user;

a router for electronically routing the job order developed by the job order developer to a printer;

a user identifier for discriminating between users communicating with the system to control user access to the digital images stored in the storage device, the user identifier limiting access to the digital images provided by the first digital image provider to at least one user identified by the first digital image provider, wherein the digital images provided by the first digital image provider are transparent to all users except users identified by the first digital image provider;

a mail database for e-mailing a notification message to the at least one user identified by the first digital image provider; and

a transmitter for transmitting at least a portion of a pathname to the at least one user identified by the first digital image provider.

113. A method of distributing a digital image via a host on the Internet, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a high resolution digital image at the host from a first user via the Internet;

generating a low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image;

receiving login information at the host from the first user, the login information including a first user identifier and a first password;

determining if the first login information is valid;

downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the first user via the Internet if the first login information is valid;

detecting a selection made by the first user, the selection made by the first user identifying the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image;

receiving identification data from the first user identifying a second user;

responding to the identification data from the first user by routing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the second user via the Internet; and

routing the high resolution digital image to a printer associated with the host in response to a request from the second user.

114. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, wherein the step of receiving data from the first user identifying a second user comprises the step of receiving authorization data from the first user, the authorization data specifying that the second user is to be granted access to digital images of the first user.

115. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 114, further comprising the step of associating a second user identifier and a second

password with the second user, the second user identifier being different than the first user identifier, the second password being different than the first password.

116. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, wherein the step of generating a low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image comprises the step of generating a thumbnail JPEG file by making a copy of the high resolution digital image and discarding some of the pixel information.

117. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, further comprising the step of translating the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image from a first file format to a second file format, the first file format being different than the second file format.

118. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, wherein the step of storing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image comprises the step of storing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image in a file format selected by the first user.

119. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, wherein the step of routing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to the second user via the Internet comprises the step of downloading the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image in a file format selected by the second user.

120. A method of distributing digital images as defined in claim 113, further comprising the step of maintaining transparency of the high resolution digital image with respect to a plurality of non-authorized users.

121. A digital image management system comprising:

an electronic storage facility for providing storage for high resolution digital images of a plurality of unrelated image providers, at least some of the high resolution digital images stored in the electronic storage facility being used to develop corresponding low resolution copies, each high resolution digital image having a higher bandwidth communication requirement than each of the corresponding low resolution copies, the electronic storage facility storing the high resolution digital images of a first one of the image providers such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider can only be accessed by authorized users identified by the first image provider and such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider are transparent to other unrelated image providers that are not authorized by the first image provider;

means for downloading a low resolution copy of a high resolution digital image to the first image provider;

means for electronically routing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to an authorized user identified by the first image provider in response to a routing request from the first image provider;

means for allowing the authorized user to identify a high resolution digital image; and

means for electronically routing the high resolution digital image from the host to a printer.

122. A digital image management and delivery system comprising:

a storage device for providing storage for digital images of a plurality of unrelated image providers, the storage device storing the digital images of a first one of the image providers such that the digital images of the first image provider can only be accessed by authorized users identified by the first image provider and such that the digital images of the first image provider are transparent to users that are not authorized by the first image provider;

a searching engine for developing a subset of the digital images stored in the storage device by the first image provider in response to inputs received from the first image provider, the searching engine being adapted to download low resolution copies of the subset to the first image provider; and

a router for electronically routing at least one of the low resolution copies of the subset to a first authorized user identified by the first image provider and for electronically routing at least one high resolution copy of a digital image contained in the subset and identified by the first authorized user to a printer.

123. A method of managing digital images comprising the steps of:

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a first plurality of digital images provided by a first image provider in an electronically searchable format on a storage device;

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a second plurality of digital images provided by a second image provider in an electronically

searchable format on a storage device, the second plurality of digital images being transparent to the first image provider and the first plurality of digital images being transparent to the second image provider;

downloading a low resolution copy of at least one of the digital images provided by the first image provider to the first image provider;

automatically electronically routing via the Internet the low resolution copy of the at least one of the digital images provided by the first image provider to a first authorized user identified by the first image provider;

receiving a request from the first authorized user, the request identifying the at least one digital image;

receiving instructions from the first authorized user directing that the at least one digital image be printed; and

automatically electronically routing the high resolution copy of the at least one digital image to a printer.

124. A digital image management and delivery system comprising:

a storage device for storing digital images received from a first digital image provider and a second digital image provider;

a searching engine for developing a subset of the digital images stored in the storage device in response to inputs received from a first user, the searching engine being adapted to download low resolution copies of the subset to the first user;

a job order developer responsive to inputs received from the first user for developing a job order which includes at least one high resolution copy of a digital image contained in the subset and identified by the first user;

a user identifier for discriminating between users communicating with the system to control user access to the digital images stored in the storage device, the user identifier limiting access to the digital images provided by the first digital image provider to at least one user identified by the first digital image provider, wherein the digital images provided by the first digital image provider are transparent to all users except users identified by the first digital image provider; and

a router for electronically routing at least one of the low resolution copies to the at least one user identified by the first digital image provider and for electronically routing the job order developed by the job order developer to a printer.

125. A digital image management system comprising:

an electronic storage facility for providing storage for high resolution digital images of a plurality of unrelated image providers, at least some of the high resolution digital images stored in the electronic storage facility being used to develop corresponding low resolution copies, each high resolution digital image having a higher bandwidth communication requirement than each of the corresponding low resolution copies, the electronic storage facility storing the high resolution digital images of a first one of the image providers such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider can only be accessed by authorized users identified by the first image provider and such that the high resolution digital images of the first image provider are transparent to other unrelated image providers that are not authorized by the first image provider;

means for electronically routing the low resolution copy of the high resolution digital image to an authorized user identified by the first image provider in response to a routing request from the first image provider;

means for allowing the authorized user to identify a high resolution digital image; and

means for electronically routing the high resolution digital image from the host to a printer.

126. A method of managing digital images comprising the steps of:

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a first plurality of digital images provided by a first image provider in an electronically searchable format on a storage device;

storing a high resolution and a low resolution copy of each of a second plurality of digital images provided by a second image provider in an electronically searchable format on a storage device, the second plurality of digital images being transparent to the first image provider and the first plurality of digital images being transparent to the second image provider.

automatically electronically routing via the Internet a low resolution copy of at least one of the digital images provided by the first image provider to a first authorized user identified by the first image provider;

receiving a request from the first authorized user, the request identifying the at least one digital image;

receiving instructions from the first authorized user directing that the at least one digital image be printed; and

automatically electronically routing the high resolution copy of the at least one digital image to a printer.

Respectfully submitted,

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